

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: JUNE 2 NOON BRIEFING EXCERPTS ON EMBASSY PENETRA-
TION
REF: STATE 139721
FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM UNCORRECTED REPEAT UNCORRECTED
TRANSCRIPT OF NOON PRESS BRIEFING JUNE 2:

QUOTE: Q. IN THIS DISCUSSION, HODDING, WILL THE SECRETARY
DISCUSS WITH MR. GROMYKO THE "WASHINGTON POST" NOTES AS THE
CONTINUED SERIES OF BUGGING THAT HAVE GONE ON IN THE
EMBASSY -- THE LATEST BEING THIS SHAFT DISCOVERED IN THE
SOUTH WING?

A. LET ME DEAL WITH THAT BUGGING QUESTION, THEN IF YOU ALL
WANT TO, AND JUST GO THROUGH THIS. I AM NECESSARILY, FOR
TWO REASONS, GOING TO HAVE A LIMITED AMOUNT TO SAY ON THIS:
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THE FIRST IS THAT ORDINARILY WE DON'T HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO
SAY ABOUT IT. THE SECOND IS THAT SINCE IT IS THE LITERAL
TRUTH THAT WE ARE STILL INVESTIGATING THE OBJECT THAT WAS
FOUND, IT'S A LITTLE BIT DIFFICULT FOR ME TO GIVE YOU ANY
GREAT DETAILS ON ITS MEANING. HOWEVER, LET ME SAY FIRST,
THAT A STIFF PROTEST WAS DELIVERED ON MAY 31ST, THROUGH OUR
EMBASSY IN MOSCOW. THIS IS CLEARLY A MATTER OF CONCERN
TO US AND WE HAVE SO INDICATED THAT IT IS A SERIOUS MATTER.

THE MATTER OF THE ELECTRONIC PENETRATION IS UNDER INVESTI-

GATION WHICH, TO REPEAT MYSELF, IS WHY I DON'T HAVE ANY FURTHER DETAILS TO GIVE YOU.

AND LET ME JUST DEAL WITH WHAT IS NOT NECESSARILY AN EXTRANEIOUS THING, BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN A MATTER OF RUNNING INTEREST, WHICH IS THE MICRORADIATION QUESTION. I AM TOLD THAT THE PENETRATION SYSTEM WHICH WAS DISCOVERED COULD NOT HAVE BEEN USED AS A SOURCE OF MICROWAVE RADIATION, BASED UPON THE PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS.

AND ON THE QUESTION OF MICROWAVE GENERALLY, RADIATION CONTINUES TO BE DIRECTED AT THE EMBASSY FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES. THE MEASURED LEVELS, HOWEVER, OF RADIATION AT THE EXTERNAL SURFACES THAT ARE BEAMED THERE AT THE EMBASSY BUILDING, REMAIN BELOW 2 MICROWATTS, THROUGH THIS PERIOD.

AND TO REPEAT WHAT'S IN THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT, IT WAS DISCOVERED ON MAY 25TH.

Q. I HAVE A FOLLOW UP TO THIS, ON MY QUESTION, IF I MAY, HODDING. HAS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT EVER BEEN ACCUSED OF DOING ANYTHING COMPARABLE TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE IN WASHINGTON? I MEAN, THE "POST" LISTED THIS LONG HISTORY OF BUGGING OF OUR EMBASSY BY THE SOVIETS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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MOSCOW, AND I WAS WONDERING: HAS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BEEN ACCUSED OF DOING ANYTHING COMPARABLE TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE IN WASHINGTON? AND DOES THE SECRETARY BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE NO LIMITATION ON WHAT WE WILL TOLERATE IN ORDER TO KEEP A US EMBASSY IN MOSCOW?

A. THAT QUESTION HASN'T ARISEN YET. ON THE OTHER THING, I DON'T KNOW OF ANY PUBLIC PROTEST, BUT THAT DOESN'T --

Q. ONE LAST FOLLOW UP ON THIS: HOW DOES AMBASSADOR TOON DISCUSS CLASSIFIED OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION WITH HIS STAFF, OR WITH VISITORS INSIDE THE EMBASSY. SURELY, IN VIEW OF THE RECORD HERE, HE DOESN'T SAY IT OUT LOUD. DO THEY WRITES NOTES, OR --

A. THAT IS CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

Q. THAT'S CLASSIFIED -- WELL, LET ME ASK YOU THIS: IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOU COULD REASSURE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THAT HE IS NOT DISCUSSING SECRET MATERIAL OUT LOUD IN OUR EMBASSY? HODDING, THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF CONCERN --

A. I CAN ASSURE -- ALL RIGHT, I AM GOING TO CUT THIS OFF, BECAUSE OBVIOUSLY, THE AMBASSADOR IS VERY CLEARLY AWARE

OF SECURITY PROBLEMS, AND OUR STAFF ARE -- NOT ONLY IN

THAT EMBASSY BUT OTHERS -- AND I THINK THAT'S ABOUT THE
END OF THAT, ON THAT LEVEL.

Q. HODDING, YOU SAY THAT THIS SYSTEM COULD NOT HAVE BEEN
THE SOURCE OF THE RADIATION, HOWEVER, COULD IT HAVE BEEN
USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXTERNAL RADIATION --

A. I DON'T WANT TO GO MUCH FURTHER THAN THAT AND I WILL
TELL YOU WHY. YOU KNOW, AS TO ANY OTHER ROLE IT MIGHT
HAVE, I REALLY DON'T WANT TO GO ANY FURTHER THAN THAT
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BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW.

Q. ANOTHER QUESTION: THIS HAPPENS AT A TIME WITHIN A
WEEK OF SEVERAL SOVIET DIPLOMATS BEING PICKED UP FOR
ALLEGED ESPIONAGE, AND WITHIN I THINK THREE WEEKS OF
ANOTHER SET OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS BEING PICKED UP. ARE WE
TO ASSUME THAT THERE IS SOME KIND OF PATTERN HERE? ARE
WE NOW CRACKING DOWN ON THE THINGS THAT WE MIGHT HAVE
TOLERATED OTHERWISE?

A. ONE, I AM NOT COMPETENT TO SPEAK ON THAT QUESTION.
OBTAINING, THAT IS AN INTELLIGENCE MATTER. BUT TWO, I
AM NOT AWARE IN THE BROADER -- AND NOT NOW RELATED TO
PURELY INTELLIGENCE FUNCTIONS TO ANY POLICY DETERMINATION
OF SOME SUDDEN TIGHTENING OR LOOSENING, OR WHATEVER, OF
SCREWS.

Q. HOD, A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS: ONE, YOU SAID, "THE
OBJECT" THAT WAS FOUND -- AS IF IT WERE ONE, SINGLE
BUGGING DEVICE -- WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED TALKING ABOUT IT.
"WE ARE INVESTIGATING THE OBJECT THAT WAS FOUND." WAS
IT, IN FACT, JUST ONE DEVICE THAT WAS FOUND IN THIS
CHIMNEY OR AIR SHAFT?

A. AGAIN, THE DETAILS ON THIS I AM GOING TO HAVE TO HOLD
FOR AWHILE -- THE EXACT CONFIGURATION OF WHAT WE HAVE AND
DON'T HAVE. IT MAY BE, OR IT MAY NOT BE -- I DON'T KNOW
HOW MUCH OF THAT IS GOING TO BE --

Q. ALL RIGHT, NOW IS THE DEVICE, OR THREE DEVICES -- ARE
THEY NOW IN THE UNITED STATES BEING EXAMINED? OR WHERE
ARE THEY?

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A. THERE -- THEY ARE THERE.

Q. THEY ARE STILL IN MOSCOW.

A. YES.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT THE DECISION TO MAKE THIS PUBLIC -- HOW IT WAS DECIDED? APPARENTLY THE EMBASSY IN MOSCOW PUT IT OUT TO JOURNALISTS THERE, BUT WHAT SORT OF DISCUSSIONS WERE THERE BACK AND FORTH ABOUT THE TIMING OF WHEN TO PUT IT OUT?

A. I DON'T -- I HAD A LITTLE SEMINAR WITH TEN PEOPLE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WHO WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT "LEAKS IN WASHINGTON" AND HOW THESE THINGS HAPPEN. THERE WASN'T ANY OFFICIAL DECISION TO PUT THE STORY OUT.

Q. WELL, HAD IT BEEN DISCUSSED EARLIER, AFTER THE DEVICE WAS DETECTED, WHETHER OR NOT TO MAKE IT PUBLIC, OR TO TRY TO KEEP IT SECRET -- OR WHAT WAS THE ADMINISTRATION --

A. I'M JUST GOING TO HAVE TO SAY THAT THAT WOULD BE AN INTERNAL DISCUSSION OF OUR POLICY.

Q. WELL WHAT WERE THE ADMINISTRATION'S CONSIDERATIONS IN NOT MAKING IT PUBLIC EARLIER?

A. WELL AGAIN, THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE A POLICY QUESTION THAT I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO DISCUSS. I WOULD NOTE THAT THE PROTEST WAS, OF COURSE, REGISTERED ON WEDNESDAY.

Q. THE PROTEST WAS ON WEDNESDAY, AND SO THE STORY THEN LEAKED ON THURSDAY, OR WAS ANNOUNCED ON THURSDAY.

A. WELL

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Q. WAS IT ANNOUNCED?

A. IT WAS NOT ANNOUNCED.

Q. WHAT IS A "STIFF" PROTEST?

A. IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT HOW THEY HAPPENED TO DETECT THE ACTIVITY IN THE TUNNEL? WAS IT LISTENING DEVICES HEARING MOVEMENT UNDER THE GROUND?

A. AGAIN, I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO INTO THAT.

Q. IS THERE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THIS TUNNEL WAS DUG AFTER THE LAST BIG BATCH OF MICROPHONES WER DUG OUT IN THE MID-

1960S FROM THE WALLS OF THE EMBASSY?

A. AGAIN, TO BE QUITE FRANK, WHETHER I WAS ABLE TO GO INTO IT OR NOT, I DON'T KNOW.

Q. THANK YOU.

Q. HAS THERE BEEN ANY REPLY TO THE PROTEST?

A. NO. THERE HAS BEEN NO REPLY.

Q. IN THE PAST, HAVE THE SOVIETS REPLIED TO THESE --

A. THAT'S RIGHT, TO THE PROTESTS. WELL, IN ANY CASE, WHATEVER THE PAST IS, THIS HAS ONLY BEEN A DAY AND A HALF, YOU KNOW, SINCE THE PROTEST WAS REGISTERED.

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Q. WE CAN'T GET THE TEXT OF THAT PROTEST, THEN, CAN WE, HODDING?

A. NO.

Q. IS THAT THAT -- IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN YOU SAY IT'S A "STIFF" PROTEST, WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT? IS THAT THE MOST SERIOUS KIND OF PROTEST?

A. I DON'T HAVE A GRADATION FOR YOU. IT WAS A STIFF PROTEST.

Q. HODDING, CAN WE COME BACK TO THE SALT?

A. YES.

Q. THERE WAS A STORY IN THE BOSTON GLOBE YESTERDAY WHICH SAYS THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR BOTH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC REASONS HAS DECIDED TO STAND PAT WITH ITS SALT POSITION EVEN IF IT MEANS WAITING OUT THE SOVIET UNION FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. THIS IS ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING WHAT WAS REALLY IN THE POST ESSENTIALLY.

A. I SAID YESTERDAY THAT WE FEEL THAT WE HAVE A GOOD SET OF PROPOSALS. I WOULDN'T CHANGE THAT POSITION. WAIT A MINUTE, THOUGH. I WAS THEN ASKED, DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOU ARE JUST ABSOLUTELY FROZEN INTO POSITION? AND I SAID THE POINT OF NEGOTIATION IS NEGOTIATING, AND THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS THAT PEOPLE CAN COME AT THE SAME SET OF PROBLEMS. ALL I AM SAYING IS THAT SO FAR WE BELIEVE THAT THAT POSITION

REPRESENTS OUR BEST SECURITY INTERESTS, AND THAT IS WHERE

WE ARE. YOU KNOW, IT TAKES TWO TO NEGOTIATE.

Q. BUT HAS A DECISION BEEN MADE TO REJECT ANY PROPOSALS

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THE RUSSIANS COME UP WITH OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS?

A. NO. I DON'T THINK THE PRESIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN ANY MORE SPECIFIC ON THIS QUESTION THAN HE WAS. THAT IS SIMPLY NOT THE POLICY. AND WHATEVER THOSE WHO ARE AT OTHER LEVELS MAY WISH TO BE PURSUING WITH LEAKS TO THE CONTRARY, IT IS NOT POLICY.

Q. HODDING, BEFORE WE LEAVE THIS BUGGING EPISODE, DID I UNDERSTAND -- I WANT TO MAKE SURE I DID -- DID I UNDERSTAND -- YOU DIDN'T SAY THAT THERE IS NOTHING THAT THE RUSSIANS COULD DO TO OUR EMBASSY THAT WOULD RESULT IN OUR KEEPING AN EMBASSY THERE AT ANY COST? I MEAN, THERE IS SOME -- THE SECRETARY -- IF SOMETHING EVEN MORE SERIOUS HAPPENED TO OUR EMBASSY THERE, WOULD THE SECRETARY RECOMMEND WE CLOSE IT UP, OR WHAT? I MEAN, IS THERE NO LIMIT TO WHAT THE RUSSIANS CAN DO TO OUR EMBASSY?

A. OBVIOUSLY WE REGARD A MATTER SUCH AS THIS AS SERIOUS INTRUSIONS UPON OUR FACILITIES IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

Q. RIGHT.

A. NOW, I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO SPECULATE WITH YOU ABOUT WHAT THE POSSIBILITIES ARE, OR IF THEY DO A, B, C. I DON'T KNOW. WE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT.

Q. I UNDERSTAND, BUT IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO DO THIS, AND WE KEEP STIFFLY PROTESTING, AND THEY KEEP DOING IT, HODDING, IF THEY DO SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS, THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD RECOMMEND THAT WE CLOSE IT UP.

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A. WAIT, WAIT. I APPRECIATE THE QUESTION, AND WHAT YOU HAVE TO APPRECIATE IS THAT I CAN'T SPECULATE DOWN THAT LINE, AND WON'T. END QUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

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